

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE



SENATOR MICHAEL N. GIANARIS
12TH DISTRICT
DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

November 26, 2019

James Patchett, President
New York City Economic Development Corporation
One Liberty Plaza
New York, New York 10006

Dear President Patchett:

I am reaching out with serious concerns about the Sunnyside Yards planning process. The New York City Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) has not embraced a democratic process in implementing public input that prioritizes environmental and social justice. Instead, our community feels this is yet another mega-project that inures to the benefit of developers leading to further gentrification and displacement.

The planning process thus far has included some public input, but that input does not appear to be reflected in the public facing materials released about the project and rather tinkers around the edges providing a few token benefits. This project should be approached with a community-first perspective, with the priority being affordable housing, adequate green space, more school seats, and the transformative transportation options western Queens needs. The planning process has also left out any discussion of how the project will be paid for and what efforts are being undertaken to ensure the resiliency of the site – Amtrak's own studies have shown the New York region of the Northeast Corridor especially vulnerable to the long-term impacts of climate change.

Additionally, NYCEDC has invited me to be a member of the steering committee. Despite never accepting the invitation, my name and office has appeared on various publications



and documents related to the project without my approval. I ask that you do not include my name on any documents or imply my assent for this process without my direct approval.

This community is in serious need of major investments – but not more luxury real estate. Affordable housing, infrastructure, schools, and transportation are critical to the future of western Queens. Do not squander the opportunity to use this process and this project to further those goals. You cannot do that without embracing a truly democratic process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Gianaris", written in a cursive style.

Senator Michael Gianaris

Deputy Majority Leader